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INSIDE THE BELTWAY

He's in charge

While waiting in Moscow in early April for an audience with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Dante B. Fascell, asked to see other members of the Politburo. He was told that they were traveling and not available. Then he requested an appointment with Victor Chebrikov, the head of the KGB.

"Why would you want to see *him*?" asked his startled Soviet host.

"Well," Mr. Fascell replied, "he's in charge of terrorism, isn't he?"

The Soviet official was not amused.

During his three-hour meeting with Mr. Gorbachev, the Florida Democrat grew tired of jotting down notes. He asked if he could simply be given a copy of the tapes later. The Soviet side looked appropriately chagrined at the suggestion they might be secretly taping the session — everyone knows only Richard Nixon pulled stunts like that.

— John Elvin